Dance and Dancers

September 1950

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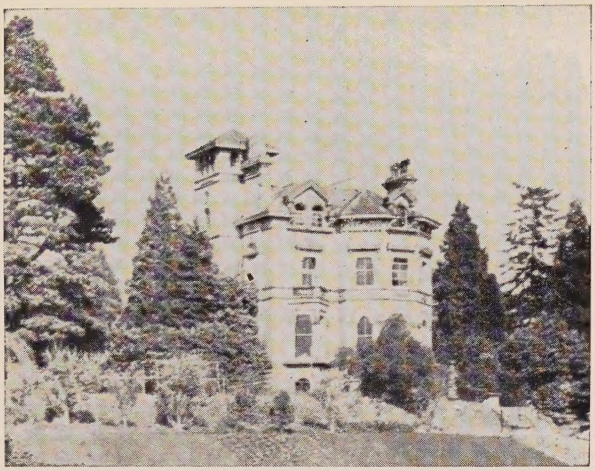
Gene Kelly in If You Feel Like Singing



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September, 1950 Vol. I. No. 9

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS

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MERSEY HOUSE, 132-4, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

THE visit of New York City Ballet to Covent Garden has been one of the most notable ballet occasions since the war. Other companies have brought us dancers and ideas but none of them has brought us a choreographer of the calibre of George Balanchine. It is all the more unfortunate that the written criticism has lacked any kind of distinction. Admittedly, the season was a very specialized meal for the *gourmet* rather than the *gourmand.*

Diaghilev was the instigator of ballet as a spectacle, in this century. He believed that ballet could only be one of the supreme arts of the theatre if it combined in equal parts the arts of the choreographer, composer, and designer. It was this Holy Trinity that made ballet what it is today. In his more recent works, Balanchine has smashed the trinity and left us with Siamese twins (choreographer-composer) of such magnificent proportions that it is impossible not to be dazzled by their somewhat monotonous beauty. These twins have little to do with theatrical make-believe, they would be equally effective in a football stadium or Waterloo Station. It is probably this untheatricality that has upset many of those critics and members of the audience more used to thinking of ballet as a lavish spectacle. What we have really been seeing has been dancing and not ballet.

I would say that Balanchine today is a man at the cross-roads. He cannot continue forever merely creating "living music"; even now it is possible to see in his most recent works in this genre, *Bourée Fantasque* and *Jones Beach*, a considerable lack of invention. On the other hand, he seems determined to ignore the story ballet as was shown by his sad mutilation of *Firebird* (it is no use telling me that this was never intended to be the same ballet as the Fokine masterpiece—that is obvious. But the idea is identical and Stravinsky's watered-down score bears a faint similarity to the one that once made him famous, so comparisons are inevitable). But Balanchine has many creative years left and it seems likely that from him we shall get the greatest choreographic advance in this century.

Poverty has been the excuse put forward for the lack of décor, but frankly this plea fails to impress me. It is artistry that clothes ballets, not money. Sadler's Wells have proved on several occasions that lavish expenditure can amount to nothing; the Ballets des Champs-Elysées have shown how a few dirty old rags can appear as fabulous raiment. It was not lack of money that perpetrated the most hideous costumes ever repeated twenty times, in *Serenade*. Some kind people in New York paid for new costumes for *Symphony in C* so there seems no excuse for not repeating the original colourful costumes which Leonor Fini designed for this work when it was first given at the Paris Opera as *Palais de Cristal.* With everyone in white tutus, as it is given now, it has lost much of its shape, particularly in the last movement.

No, I fear it is a certain lack of artistic direction which even the brilliant lighting of Jean Rosenthal (I hope the Covent Garden staff took note of what can be done with exactly the same equipment that has failed to light our own ballets) cannot entirely replace. The great success of *Prodigal Son* was mainly due to the perfect cohesion of the trinity; the spectral hand of Diaghilev still hovered over the work created in the last year of his earthly life.

This young company should ponder on these things because they have so much to offer—excellent, if not outstanding, dancers blessed and animated by the greatest choreographer still practising. This should be enough for anyone and was for me, but unfortunately I am not the only person who goes to ballet.

★

The 1950 American ballet invasion was not quite so formidable as we had hoped on account of the fact that poor Martha Graham and her company never opened at all. Her European tour was dogged by bad luck as she originally hurt her knee two nights after her Paris opening. She seemed to have recovered by the time the company arrived in London but extensive rehearsals brought the trouble on again and the season was cancelled on the morning of her *première.* Everyone interested in the dance was looking forward to seeing her and it is to be hoped that she will be able to make the trip again in the spring.

We were very nearly deprived of the pleasure of seeing Ballet Theatre owing to the sinister rumblings in that ever-present volcano—The International Situation. Mercifully good sense prevailed and by this time they should have reached our shores, though after last month I shall never assume that anything is *fait accompli* until I have actually seen it with my own eyes.

The most disturbing factor in the whole business was that anyone should have considered it necessary to cancel the visit while those on pleasure-bent were still plying backwards and forwards across the Atlantic. In the later stages of the last war it was found that ballet did more to boost morale than any of those expensive pep talks with which we were so frequently regaled. Let us start the next one having learned a few lessons from the last. The morale of our people is more important than bombs on whatever enemy we happen to be fighting. Ballet has its part to play as the Russians proved during the seige of Leningrad. If at the first bellicose rumble we are promptly going to close down on everything that faintly smacks of "entertainment", then all hope has gone. If anything can be done to forge further links in the chain that binds the two great nations of Britain and America then nothing should be spared in seeing that it is accomplished—even if it happens to be something so apparently trivial as ballet.

Cover Story

Our cover this month shows Gene Kelly in a scene from the new Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer musical *If You Feel Like Singing* : he stars with Judy Garland and a recent dancing discovery, Nita Bieber. The film was produced by Joe Pasternak with music by Mack Gordon and Harry Warren.

GENE KELLY began his dancing career in the city where he was born—Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. While he was still at Grammar School he began attending dancing school, where he was known as the best dancer in the neighbourhood. After a year at Pennsylvania State College he transferred to the University of Pittsburgh but before his graduation he determined to become a dancer. Not long after that he went to New York and got a small dancing role in *Leave it to Me*, followed by the role of Harry the Hoofer in Saroyan's *Time of Your Life.* At the same time he was Dance director at Billy Rose's Diamond Horseshoe. It was here that he met the girl who became his wife, Betsy Blair. In 1940 he was cast in the leading role of *Pal Joey.* His phenomenal success in this show led to offers from every film company. He signed with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and made *For Me and My Gal, Dubarry was a Lady, Thousands Cheer* and *Cover Girl.* He then proved himself to be a dramatic actor in *Christmas Holiday* and *Cross of Lorraine.* After two more successful musicals *Ziegfield Follies* and *Anchors Away* he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Two years later he was discharged as a Lieutenant and made *Living in a Big Way* followed by *The Pirate.* His most recent musical *On The Town* was featured in our April issue.

Contributors

CARYL BRAHMS has written on many occasions in these pages from her view on the function of a critic to her recent Discontent with the Divine. This month she gives her impressions of our distinguished visitors The New York City Ballet (Pages 6-7-8).

CLIVE BARNES, Secretary of the Oxford Ballet Club, is also one of our regular contributors. He writes about the Sadler's Wells character dancer—Alexander Grant (Page 9).

RICHARD KAYNE is a young light composer and as well as his musicals he recently wrote a hit number, *Who's Keeping You Now*, for Muriel Smith on television. He writes about the dancing in *Golden City* (Page 16).

EVAN SENIOR is our regular music critic. This month he writes about the music in Balanchine Ballets and also on the return of the English ballet conductor—Hubert Foster Clark.

Next month

Full-Colour cover of Ram Gopal

NEW YORK CITY HANGOVER. Impressions of the season of New York City Ballet

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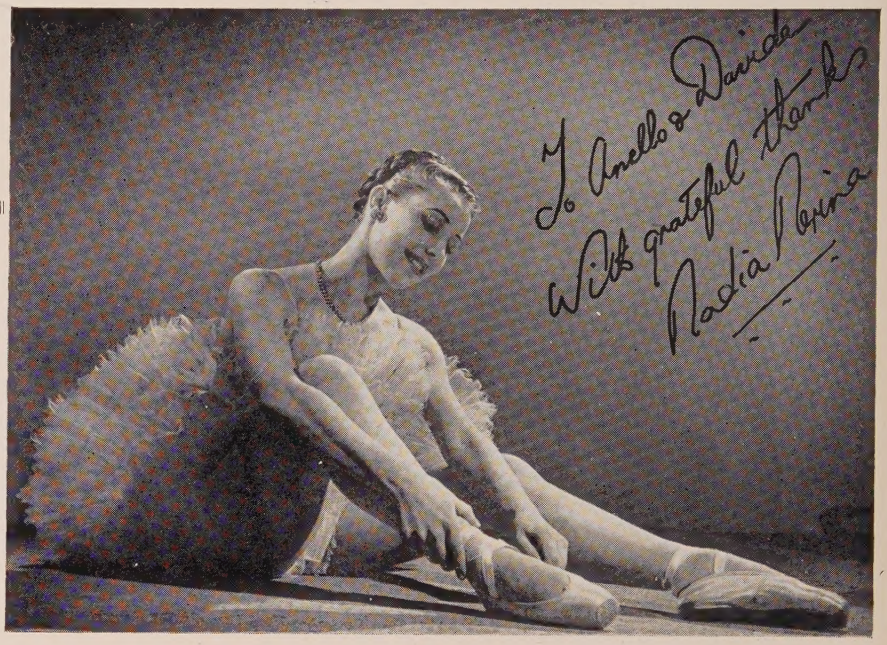

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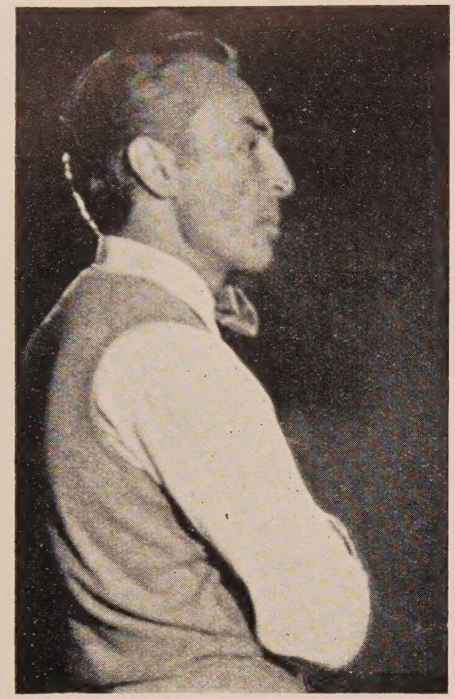
Moira Shearer of The Sadler's Wells Ballet as Princess Aurora in the Sleeping Beauty (*Photo : Baron*)

Caryl Brahms on . .



George Balanchine

THE New York City Ballet, a team of young American dnacers, have with their skill, their spirit and their friendliness, been breaking down the British balletgoer's resistance to Visitors playing the Wells Home Ground.

In this they have been greatly helped by the immediate wave of sympathy that went out to them when their ewe-star suffered an injury on their opening night and was unable to appear for the rest of the week.

Formed in the first place as a vehicle on which to mount the ballets of George Balanchine, the company came to us 46 strong, in a repertory of 18 works: 12 by Balanchine (one in collaboration with Jerome Robbins), 2 by Robbins alone, and one a piece by Christensen, Dollar, and Bollender.

Coming to us without Governmental or municipal dower, the company that bears the City of New York's name on its banner is but scantly decorated, appearing for the most part in seemingly fortuitous costumes before the barest of backcloths, with much of their music already existing in concert form. The accent therefore, has fallen rather heavily on Choreography.

THE DANCERS

My overall impression of this young company, as I look back over two weeks of strenuous ballet-going (9 ballets in the bag; 9 more ballets still to go, plus the one which right now is little more than a furrough on the brow of Mr. Cranko of Sadler's Wells) is of a devoted team of technicians with a great deal of talent but little outstanding personality. With a bent for the callisthenic but not the truly classical, they are setting out to form an American school of Ballet by single-mindedly endeavouring to adapt themselves to a tradition of formalism that is alien to their national temperament and to their normal tempo. In accepting this discipline they may well be grafting a new, a national branch of ballet on to the ancient family tree, just as we have done at The Wells. The utterance of both companies remains that of the Ballet Russe, but we speak it with differing intonations.

Like the Wells, and unlike the Paris Opera Ballet, the company is stronger on the distaff side.

Maria Tallchief commands an eloquent and tender line with a near-acrobatic skill. But she expresses her emotion almost entirely in movement and her interesting face is closed against the warmth and play of expression.

Melissa Hayden has developed into a soloist of an intelligent and elegant kind, a little along the lines of our Moira Shearer. As yet there has been small opportunity for us to enjoy her sense of fun which so immediately won our affections when she came here with Ballet Theatre.

Janet Reed has a quite phenomenal elevation and her dancing is as many-faceted as a diamond—and just about as bright and hard.

Tanaquil Le Clercq deploys a long and fluent line and brings a blonde pliancy to all that she is required to do.

But the men of the company are disappointing. No new Skibine, no budding Eglevsky has danced his way into our breathing appa atus, so far.

THE BALLETS

No ballet by Balanchine is totally devoid of the divine, for he is a great designer of abstractions, painting his patterns with the limbs of his dancers, and going to the dancer for his primal inspiration, as other choreographers turn to music for theirs. But like all choreographers, Balanchine is at his best when he builds his ballets on a theme. That is why *Ballet Imperial*, which was mounted by the Wells last season, is a better work than *Serenade*, *Symphony in C*, *Bourrée Fantasque*, or *Symphonie Concertante*. Certainly *Serenade*, even though it is danced in costumes like depressed Dragonflies, is the best of the strenuously technical abstracts. Watching it is like sitting in a dark room lit unceasingly by summer lightning, so remorselessly continuous is its dazzling invention.

Symphonie Concertante committed the solecism of "interpreting" a miracle by Mozart; and I just didn't get *Bourree Fantasque* at all.

Fireworks and Firebirds

Les Illuminations and a re-kindling of the *Firebird* have formed the conversation pieces of the foyer.

Of *Les Illuminations* let me say at once that I cannot interpret the ballet to you—Mr. Ashton alone, in the words of Rimbaud,"has the key to the unbridled parade", and with it he has locked London Balletgoers into two contending keeps—The Unashamedly Ashamed and the Unashamedly Unshamable.

Choreographically this work derives from his *Wedding Bouquet* with the element of the ridiculous removed.*

The work seems to me to be taking place on two different planes simultaneously, visually it is in the present; and aurally in the past.

On the stage Mr. Ashton sets his untamed poet posturing now among the writings, now through the life story of Rimbaud; and we watch him spinning through love and hate and among the earthy ink-blots and the celestial asterisks, the doodled moons and catherine-wheel suns, of Mr. Beaton's inspired cookery. I found the gauze simplifications of the poet's *fin-de-siecle* cosmos admirable though the costumes seemed to have come from A Child's Guide to Aubrey Beardsley ("no nursery is complete without it"). To this Rimbaudian frolic, Ashton has brought a curious mixture of sophistication and naïvetée; and it is the naïve which makes this particular "Suburban

Maria Tallchief, wife of Balanchine, who is the principal dancer. She is the sister of Marjorie Tallchief, one of the principal dancers of the de Cuevas Grand Ballet. On the first night of the season Maria injured her ankle and was unable to dance for over a week. Her best roles are in Orpheus, Firebird, Divertimento Serenade, and the Guests

(*Photo: Melton Pippin*)

* I am irresistably reminded of a pre-war play in which the curtain descended on Mr. Felix Aylmer, most British of Polar Explorers, examining with some approval a blue and white flag, somehow familiar, yet somehow different. It was, he had just explained, the dear old Union Jack with the dangerous red element removed. It would be so much easier to analyse that farce than this ballet!

New York City Ballet

Bacchante" emulate those in Rimbaud's poem and Weep.

In presenting his Being Beauteous with "The pale ashen face, the mane-like hair," Mr. Ashton has the authority of his author; but there was much in his passages for his lady of Profanity (one shoe off and one shoe on—sing Hey Diddle Dumpling) that One's Aunt would term "unnecessary", by which she would mean too urgently necessary to be a spectacle suitable for The Ballet. To cram the subject of suitability into a sentence, let me put it to you that my good sense tells me that a starving man is going to need a meal very urgently, but my good taste makes me hope that I would not be required to stare at him while he was eating it. For the rest, I am attracted to the ballet's other-worldliness, and to the movement, much of it sensitive and subtle, in which it is suggested.

Mr. Britten's music takes place on quite another plane—that of emotion remembered rather than of present experience. His orchestra is now an instrument of infinite understanding and forgiveness, now a bracing nor'wester blowing away the cobwebs, while the gulls (a tenor voice—at the first performance that of the distinguished singer, Peter Pears) breaking the heart of the horizon with their lament. The company danced the work expertly enough, but I guess they were every bit as clueless as your faithful servant.

Firebird really did succeed in shocking me. Balanchine's disjointed and obscure Fairy Tale, with its acrobatic Firebird and its unregal Princesses, its Infernal Dance that I found infernally like the infernal dance in the Berlioz Ballet, will never take the place in my affections of the compelling enchantment, the grave dignity, the fabulous faded splendour of the Fokine-Goncharova Once Upon A Time. Chagall's *rideau* set the right mood of "now anything might happen", only practically nothing did. Köstchei's magic garden seemed to have been planted by Van Gogh the day after tomorrow; his wedding cloth must have been designed in collaboration with Peter Pan—or possibly Peter Brook. While the savage cuts in one of the three greatest scores ever composed for the ballet made by the composer himself, for no matter what reason, was easily the most shocking thing of all.

Tallchief's Firebird was virtuous and well-extended but strictly unmagical, and Kramer was a princess of charm and grace if not of high lineage.

Hell's Veils

Orpheus showed Balanchine at his most telling. It had not quite the classical economy and clarity, the stylishness of his *Appollon Musagetes*, then neither had the music. But the

(*continued over*)

Tanaquil LeClercq started dancing at the age of seven; she won a scholarship at the School of American Ballet and has remained there ever since. Her principal roles are in Orpheus, Age of Anxiety, Bourée Fantasque, Jones Beach *and* Symphonie Concertante

Maria Tallchief in Symphony in C. *This ballet was first given at the Paris Opera under the title of* Palais de Cristal, *when Balanchine was a guest choreographer. This Bizet symphony has been used before as a ballet when Andrée Howard created* Assembly Ball *for Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet*

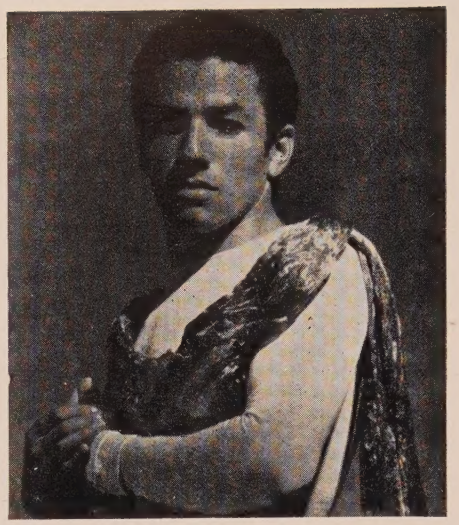
Patricia Wilde and Nicholas Magallanes in the fourth and final movement of Balanchine's Serenade. *This beautiful work to Tchaikovsky's* Serenade for Strings, *was one of the first of Balanchine's "living music" ballets and has influenced many of today's young choreographers* (*Photo: Duncan Melvin*)

continued from page seven

work was by no means without style and taste, for all that, nor was the music without a certain intellectual romanticism. As Euridice, Tallchief was at her most eloquent and most elegant, but the star of the ballet was the undulating white curtain that floated down through the lights to wall the journey to the Underworld. Mr. Kirstein would be well advised to put it under contract lest we of Covent Garden require it to provide a graceful limbo around the Festival of Britain. *Orpheus* was decorated by Nogucchi, whom I take to be the poor man's Dali.

With *Fancy Free* and *Interplay* in mind one would have said that Jerome Robbins would be the perfect choreographer for this company, for his work brings new treatments to old forms. But his *Age of Anxiety* got me worried. Based on a poem by W. H. Auden the mood of which is faithfully reflected in that line of his which reads: "The world needs a wash and a week's rest" Mr. Robbins' Ballet seems to be saying "And How!" The work is episodic, but all the episodes and all the characters looked alike to me. But though the Seven Ages and Seven Stages lacked definition they were fascinating to watch as sheer movement. Oliver Smith's décors were, for once, no great help to clarity and Irene Sharraff's costumes made me think of Shrimps, strictly out of aspic. Bernstein swaddled the rhythmic vigour of his music in several thicknesses of self-pitying vulgarity.

Amid so much high cultural endeavour *Jinx*, a circus ballet, by Christensen, to Britten's Variations on a theme by Frank Bridge, with décors by Morcom, shone like a coloured rocket on a starless night. If it lacked the subtlety and sustained nostalgia of *Les Forains*, or the jostling merriment and the pity of *Petrouchka*, at least it created a sturdy enough mood of its own, and if its climax failed to chill our spines at least we knew just where we were—watching an overlong, aptly danced and aptly decorated one-ring circus that was not afraid of laughter and hadn't got a message in the world.



Francisco Moncion who was outstanding in the title role of the Prodigal Son, *one of the most successful ballets of the season*

STOP PRESS !

It is with the liveliest possible pleasure that I add to this report a post-script following an admirable revival of Balanchine's *Fils Prodigue*, created in 1929 by Kochno, with a robust score by Prokofiev (which, incidentally, produced the finest orchestral playing of the season under the revitalising baton of Robert Irving), and with satiric costumes and backcloths of simplified but powerfully compelling grotesqueness from the broad brush of Roualt.

The Prodigal (acted with great feeling by Moncion) passes from the restive torment of youth, through acrobatic depravity, to the fullness of the forgiveness of Fatherhood in the ballet's moving close; a close in which the choreographer rises to a great height of humanity, as Father takes Son back into his all-embracing safe-keeping, a moment of almost Biblical piety and dignity.

Not only is it alive with its own vivid invention, but Balanchine brought to this, the last ballet he was to animate for Diaghilev, a range of feeling that has been notably lacking in his later work. How the orgy sparkles with the fun of so much apt new movement (for new it was in 1929) punctuated by agog gaderene groups, till the shame of both betrayal and betrayed stops our amusement with its sudden shock. How near the passages of passion (in which Moncion was joined by Yvonne Mouncey who danced with an anaphrodisiac stylishness) sailed to the acrobatic, yet never did they exceed what is artistically and physically permissable and seemly.

And what a pity it was that this excellent ballet could not be given on the night that the company made its bow to us.

(*Below*) *The opening of the fourth movement of* Serenade. *With Maria Tallchief on the ground and Nicholas Magallanes standing over her. The arms of the third person are of Melissa Hayden. This is one of the most emotional movements in any abstract ballet* (*Photo: Duncan Melvin*)

The end of Orpheus. *Apollo* (*Herbert Bliss*) *evokes the spirit of Orpheus as the God of Song. This is the second of a great classical trilogy of which* Apollo *was the first, and the last is still to be created. The music and choreography are by Stravinsky and Balanchine* (*Photo: Duncan Melvin*)

Some talk of Alexander . . .

by CLIVE BARNES

ALEXANDER GRANT was born in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1925. He started to dance at the age of seven and took many Royal Academy of Dancing examinations. In 1944 he won the R.A.D. Bi-Annual Scholarship, which enabled him to continue his studies in London. He arrived in England at the beginning of 1946 and was accepted for the Sadler's Wells school. While still a student he appeared with the first company at Covent Garden, and soon after joined the newly-formed Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. For a time he, together with Donald Britton and Michael Hogan, oscillated between the two companies, appearing as unofficial and unsung guest artist in *The Three Ivans* at Covent Garden, and with the junior company at Islington. I can only find record of his appearing in two roles with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet; the Old Man in *Khadra* (this was his first creation, and has the distinction of being his only purely mimed role) and the Popular Song in *Facade*.

When the Wells' second season at Covent Garden opened in October 1946 he was a permanent member of the company, and in the November he created a small part in Ashton's ill-fated *Les Sirènes*. It is a widely held misconception that Grant was discovered by Massine. In fact almost as soon as he joined the company he was given solo roles, dancing the Gravedigger in *Hamlet* and Brian Shaw's part in *Symphonic Variations*, Shaw having been called into the Forces. In the last few days of 1946 he became a listed soloist. In the revivals of *Three-cornered Hat* and *La Boutique Fantasque* he danced the Dandy and a Poodle. When on November 26, 1947, Massine revived his *Mam'zelle Angot*, Grant was cast as the Barber. The audience loved him and from that night onwards he was firmly established in the public's affection.

Grant has a remarkable power of building up a portrayal. When he first assumed Shaw's part in *Symphonic Variations* he gave a poor performance. The role had been built around Shaw's individual qualities, and had Grant been a dancer with an impeccable technique (and he was not) it would have been difficult for him to have erased memories of his predecessor. Yet Grant slowly, during the course of many performances, recreated the role around himself, substituting his strength for Shaw's fluency and his elevation for Shaw's speed.

He has a fine elevation and exceptional ballon. A dancer with a considerable elevation can leap high, but it is ballon which gives the lightness that endows the leap with power, control and beauty. For elevation all a dancer needs are strong leg muscles, a good plié and an ability to launch himself from the plié—ballon is a rarer quality. Allied to this there is in Grant's dancing a sense of movement defying gravity. If a stone is thrown into the air, between the instant of it ceasing to go up and starting to come down, there is a pause. In a leap the length of this pause varies from dancer to dancer, possibly according to their breathing and certainly with relation to the type of leap used. Grant has the trick, not uncommon among good dancers, of appearing to remain suspended in air for a split-second.

Grant as the clock - maker in Massine's Clock Symphony (*Photo: Baron*)

Another characteristic of his dancing is elasticity. He catapults from the ground and there is a tensile spring to his movements. Not a particularly fast dancer, his turns have great strength rather than facility. He has a rugged power, often untidy, always exciting, and appears to put his whole heart into his dancing and to use every muscle of his body.

What of the future? Certainly he can improve, he could for example, canalise some of his abundant vigour and virility into a masculine grace, the quality in which he is most deficient. He can, and should, improve his classical technique. To give this improvement an impetus why not cast him for a classical role which would not fit him like a glove? He could hardly be the worst Bluebird we have seen at Covent Garden. Excellent as his comic sketches are, I feel that his real talent is very possibly for serious characterisation. What is essential to his further development, and this applies to at least half a dozen of the Wells' boys, is that a choreographer should exploit his talents to the full. Massine came near to this, particularly in *Clock Symphony*, but the full possibilities of Grant are still to be realised. Personally, I would rather like to see David Lichine mount a ballet on him.

In all Grant's various roles with Sadler's Wells in only one has he been less than good. There are very few dancers of whom one could say more.

Alexander Grant has appeared in the following roles in this country:

Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet:

Khadra—The Old Man.

Facade—Popular Song.

Sadler's Wells Ballet:

The Sleeping Beauty—Ivan, Leading Ivan, Cavalier, Puss in Boots.

Swan Lake—Czardas.

Coppelia—Czardas and Mazurka.

Les Sirènes—Child and Oriental.

Symphonic Variations—role created by Brian Shaw.

Facade—Dago.

The Three-cornered Hat—Dandy.

La Boutique Fantasque—Poodle, Tarantella.

Mam'zelle Angot—Barber.

Clock Symphony—Clock-maker.

The Rake's Progress—Gentleman with the Rope.

Job—War, Pestilence and Famine.

Don Quixote—Sancho Panza.

Hamlet—Gravedigger.

Ballabile—Dancer.

Grant has also appeared in: *Giselle, Nocturne, Dante Sonata, Les Patineurs, Scenes de Ballet, Miracle in the Gorbals.*

Music . . . . . by EVAN SENIOR

HORSES AND WATER

Some people liked the recent London season at Covent Garden of the New York City Ballet. Others did not. But, likes and dislikes apart, this season probably gave us more to think and talk about than any previous ballet season in recent history.

MY job is to look at it from the point of view of music. That does not mean divorcing music from ballet and regarding it by itself. Music is part of ballet, not just an adjunct of it. Music has something to say, something very definite and very important. And when someone sets out to make a ballet using existing music, he must know what the music is saying, understand what is being said and—perhaps even more important—*how* it is being said, then take it up and weave it into the structure of the ballet he is making.

That is where our British choreographers, in recent years, have fallen down on the job. They know their dancing; they even know a great deal of the art of choreography; but quite obviously they have not troubled, in so many cases, to understand the music they have chosen to use.

From this season of the New York City Ballet there was little that our dancers needed to learn. I think we can safely say that. But I hope and pray that all our British choreographers and would-be choreographers spent every night in the Royal Opera House, watching, listening, and learning from the ballets of George Balanchine.

Nowadays the word genius is so sadly overused that it has almost lost its meaning. And when a genius turns up, we almost feel that it is an insult to apply to him the same term that we use for any twopenny-halfpenny dancer with a sense of the theatrical who manages to make a ballet of sorts.

In a repertoire ranging from the crystalline clarity of *Orpheus* to the deliciously vulgar humour of *Bourrée Fantasque*, Balanchine has a scope and breadth of understanding that showed us a mind working like that of a composer. When composer and choreographer work together it is a comparatively simple job. Each can adjust himself to the other, so that the resulting work is almost the product of a single mind. It is a different matter when a choreographer uses music already written, and which must be studied and understood before being thought of in terms of the dance.

Balanchine showed us a balanced mind at work. He had looked into his music and seen not only how much was in it but also, in some cases, how little. And he was able to seize on the salient points, and to make them the focal points of his ballet.

He knew the form and orchestration of the Mozart *Symphonie Concertante* well enough to make that the foundation of a ballet that ought to be used as a lesson to kindergarten children—and to choreographers—in the art of orchestral construction translated into visual form.

He not only picked out the immature building of the Bizet *Symphony in C* but also caught the youthful spirit that inspired the seventeen-year-old composer of this charming and refreshing work, all its eager and tumbling gaiety and delight. He took liberties with the Tschaikowsky *Serenade* which were permissible because they were successful, and successful because he knew what the music was about. One could write interminably about these and other Balanchine ballets which this significant season gave us, and about how well he has borne in mind the abilities and limitations of his material—his dancers—when planning these works for them.

I have not met Balanchine, nor have I needed to. "By their fruits shall ye know them." A great artist can be better known from his works than by shaking hands with him or chatting with him. And I think that Balanchine would prefer to be known by his "fruits".

There's an old saying that you can take a horse to water but you can't make him drink. The New York City Ballet season, and in particular the ballets of Balanchine, provided British ballet with enough water to last its thirsty choreographers half a lifetime. We can only hope that they drank their fill and at the same time filled their reserve tanks for the future.

CONDUCTOR FOR BALLET

The appointment of Hubert Foster Clark as musical director for the Dolin Gala Performances of Ballet is a step forward in the emergence of this company as an important factor in British ballet.

SO often, the musical side of a permanent ballet company is left in the hands of a musician who, although he may be—and nearly always is—a capable orchestral conductor, is not always conversant with this particular branch of music.

In ballet, neither music nor dancing exists on its own in absolute entirety. Each is part of a whole, part of something different from either of them—ballet. A musician who undertakes this work must know his music much more thoroughly than the ordinary run of theatre conductors, for he is, largely, dealing with music of a different type, and he must know just what can be done with it, and—perhaps even more important—just what cannot be done.

Hubert Foster Clark is one who has made a thorough study of music in the realm of ballet. Trained at the Royal College of Music under such present-day practical masters as Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Malcolm Sargent, he has spent many years in the theatre in the actual practice of the art he loves. Before the last war he entered the British Broadcasting Corporation's musical department, and worked as conductor of the B.B.C. Midland Orchestra under the late Leslie Heward. Afterwards he was transferred to Manchester, where he conducted the B.B.C. Northern Orchestra.

War service found him in the East, and on his return he found work even more to his musical liking when he joined Massine for the tour of the ballet-musical based on the Brahms-Simon story, *A Bullet in the Ballet*.

"I learned more from Massine of the difficult job of ballet conducting than at any time previously," he says. "It was a collaboration which I valued, and which taught me a great deal."

Following this season, Foster Clark was engaged by Marie Rambert in 1947 as musical director for her company's long tour of Australia and New Zealand. Eager for more knowledge and experience of the branch of music to which he had devoted himself, Foster Clark found inspiration and satisfaction in the difficult work of training and rehearsing orchestras in the different and widely-spaced cities of the Dominions, adapting new players and new combinations to the needs of ballet while at the same time impressing on the dancers the fundamental needs of music.

In Australia he again made contact with Eugene Goossens, regarded throughout the world as one of the great ballet conductors.

In the past year, since his return from the Rambert tour, Foster Clark has made no public appearances as a conductor. Instead, he has devoted most of his time to study and research, and has made many visits to Continental music libraries and archives, going back to the original sources and scores for study of music in relation to ballet.

Following his appointment he spent many weeks, before taking up his position, in rescoring certain of the musical works in accordance with the original intentions of the composers and choreographers, and in selecting and rehearsing the players in the permanent orchestra which will travel with the newly constituted company.

Model for the Hades scene in the Balanchine-Stravinsky Orpheus, *made by the Japanese-American sculptor and designer—Isamu Noguchi. The settings for this ballet were some of the most exciting seen on our stages for many years. Noguchi, being a sculptor, uses simple shapes and light. His use of a silk curtain which comes pouring down to depict the journey to and from Hades is the first new stage effect that we have seen for a long time. It is impossible to describe the impact it has on the audience. Noguchi has also designed most of Martha Graham's ballets*

L'ILE des SIRENES

First given by the Fonteyn-Helpmann concert group at Tunbridge Wells on June 2, 1950. Choreography by Alfred Rodrigues. Music by Debussy. Costumes by Loudon Sainthill.

CAST:

The Mariner.....Robert Helpmann
The Sirens.....Margot Fonteyn

"*And now a rare tale, quoth he, to my mind anent a vessel which foundered in a siroc not far from the Siren rocks, where all hands were drowned save only the captain's son, who was reserved for a worse fate. Him the waves bore to a pebbly beach, as far as might tire a little child to run, where on sat a maiden singing, who looked up with eyes of friendship. Being a grave lad he walked aside and, stumbling among the stone, happened upon a heap of decaying human bones, a loathly thing. Yet she followed with endearing words, till he lost reason for her sake. Fair to see was this maiden, fair beyond all imagining to those she had fooled, and he deemed himself favoured above the angels. A brief infatuation, for soon a change came over her, and while he cherished her more than before, the light of love faded out of her eyes and there stole into them the look of a hundred generations of tigers*".

It was the above quotation from Norman Douglas' *Siren Land* that gave Rodrigues the idea for the ballet and he kept very closely to the story. Very different from the sort of work one expects in concert performances, it was ideal for showing a different side to Fonteyn's genius. The long and interesting *pas de deux* for the Mariner and The Siren bore a certain similarity to Petit's *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit*. Rodrigues has been lucky to have Fonteyn as ballerina in the second ballet that he has choreographed but, in spite of the obvious limitations that must be put on works in this kind of presentation, he has achieved a setting worthy of the fabulous jewel.

Photos : Felix Fonteyn

COPENHAGEN

The Royal Danish Ballet 2

by

Peter Williams

Lillian and Svend Erik Jensen in the Norwegian dance from Galeotti's Les Caprices du Cupidon et du Maître de Ballet. *This work is the earliest in any European repertoire and was discussed in our last issue* (*Photo: Mydskov*)

TRADITION is a fine thing, it is the sturdy stem from which new branches can sprout with their luscious and frequently impermanent fruit. But tradition has its disadvantages which became apparent to me a few nights after the opening of the Royal Danish Ballet summer season.

Bournonville, of whom I wrote at length last month, was the maker and creator of ballet in Denmark but his soft and sweet style is seeping into everything. This style is the complete antithesis of the hard Russian brilliance of Petipa—*Aurora's Wedding* (or *Aurora's Bryllup* as it is most aptly called in Danish) and *Swan Lake* took on a new and alien air. As well as the lack of style, it was unfortunate that various people had taken it into their heads to make a number of alterations. In one-act versions of these three-act masterpieces, nobody particularly minds if the best dances from other acts are interpolated, but the dances themselves should be right otherwise there seems little point in doing classics. In a country where they take such pride in preserving their own classics it seems strange that works, so well-known to the rest of the world, should be so mutilated.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY CLASSICS

Of the two twentieth-century classics, Massine's *Beau Danube* and Fokine's *Petrouchka*, the former though choreographically right was given with such archness and daintiness that it resembled Viennese operetta rather than the Prater. *Petrouchka*, on the other hand, has been more carefully and lovingly preserved than any post-Diaghilev production that we have seen. The handling of the crowd, so important in this ballet, was masterly; again every person was a distinct character who never obtruded from the background. Borge Ralov well conveyed the sawdust puppet striving for human life and Margrethe Schanne had the frozen coquettishness of the Ballerina. Neils Bjorn Larsen was particularly good as the old Charlatan and I was again struck, as on every occasion that characterisation has been called for, how valuable it is to have a great tradition of mime. It is the complete plausibility of these small roles that cause narrative ballets to have some meaning.

Ballets of our immediate yesterdays, like ladies hats, are more dated than those of fifty years ago. The thought and mode of the 'thirties seem quite antedeluvian to us now but it is the greatest mistake to drop all works of this period for the circle will eventually be completed and they in their turn will become the revered classics of tomorrow. Borge Ralov's *The Widow in the Mirror* is of the "disillusionment" period but it is well worth preserving. The story by the famous Danish writer, Kjeld Abell (who also designed the costumes and décor), is about a rich girl who makes a smug and conventional marriage. She and her husband live a monotonous life. Suddenly he dies and she goes into the usual mourning, still without any knowledge of the outside world. She thinks that her life is as complete as the portrait an artist has been painting of her all through the ballet. Her attraction to a particularly foul beggar causes her to look at the portrait, which is in reality a mirror—she sees nothing but emptiness. After realising the futility of her life she follows the beggar out into the world.

Borge Ralov, who is also the principal male dancer in the company, has created a remarkable atmosphere in this work and the monotony of the girl's life is well conveyed without being monotonous to the audience. The *pas de deux* symbolising the imagined purity of marriage is beautifully devised and well danced by Mona Vangsaa and Kjeld Noack.

BALLETS BY LANDER

Harald Lander has been ballet master at the Royal Theatre since 1932 and in that time has added about twenty-five new works of his own to the repertoire. They are in such varying styles that it is impossible to point to any ballet and say "that is by Lander," he is a choreographer without a trademark. Of his seven works that were shown during the season, *Qarrtsiluni* was outstanding. Greenland is an unusual locality for a ballet; this is about that moment before the sun breaks through after the long winter. Starting off with a long

A scene from Nini Theilade's recent ballet—Metaphor. *Woman* (*Mona Vangsaa*) *struggles against masculine elements which are, from left to right—The Anonymous* (*Stanley Williams*)*; The Aggressive* (*Fredbjorn Bjornsson, kneeling*)*; The Masculine* (*Borge Ralov*)*; and The Frayed* (*Poul Gnatt*)*. The music is by Bentzon and the décor and costumes by Erik Nordgreen* (*Photo: Mydskov*)

AGAIN

and strangely moving solo by Niels Bjorn Larsen, dancing with an instrument that looks like a huge tambourine, it works up to a thrilling finale with everyone dancing frantically as the sun rises. This work with a score by Riisager was created during the war; then it had a hidden meaning as it was supposed to represent the Danish people waiting for the day that they would be liberated.

Lander's *Etude* runs through the whole gamut of ballet from class to performance to the music of Czerny's *etudes*. For explaining to uninitiated the mysteries of ballet, it is ideal if rather lengthy, It also shows just what good dancers this company has got. Toni Lander dances the principal role and although at the moment she is too young to sustain it, she has an attack and clean line that should make her, in a few years time, an outstanding dancer.

The other five ballets of Lander did not excite me unduly. Two of them are influenced by his quite understandable love of Spain. *Bolero* must have been one of the first ballets created to Ravel's persistent piece of Franco-Espana and it is rather like a scena in a revue. I kept on getting the feeling that Bea Lillie was going to appear at any moment. *Morning, Noon and Night*, a curiously colourless work to Torlina music, had life pumped into it by the dancing of Margrethe Schanne as the Senorita and Fredbjorn Bjornsson as her dream lover. *L'Apprenti-Sorcier* to Dukas music was pure "micky mouse". The Hans Anderson *Shepherdess and the Chimney Sweep* though charming for a matinee did not sit happily in an evening's programme; it was interesting to see the work of the children but impossible not to start comparing their lack of technique with their elders. *Cockaigne* is another of those ballets about tiresome children who go to gingerbreadland; the only excuse for such a journey, as far as I can see, is that at the end there should be some interesting dancing—here there was none.

RECENT CREATIONS

Nini Theilade will be remembered by many people in England as a dancer with the Monte Carlo ballet and in Regent's Park before the war. This year she has choreographed two works for the Royal Theatre—*Metaphor* to music by the Danish composer Bentzon, and *Concerto* to the Schumann piano concerto. Both suffer slightly from the defect that is apt to assail all women choreographers—a falling-off at the end. I found that I liked *Metaphor* in spite of the fact that it was called an "expressionistic" ballet. The story of a girl who struggles against various masculine elements is the axis upon which the ballet revolves and it contains many interesting groups and exciting male *soli*; it reminded me, in many ways, of Massine's *Les Presages*. Though the idiom may have passed it was theatrically effective. Theilade's *Concerto* is of the school of Balanchine, passages from his *Serenade* as well as Taras' *Designs with Strings* are very noticeable. The first movement is very good, the music of the second is almost undanceable, the third is weak and not helped by the fact that costumes run through the whole history of dancer's dress.

The most recent work in the repertoire is Birger Bartholin's *Symphonie Classique* to Prokofieff's score of the same name. Having been used to Tudor's *Gala Performance* to this music, I found it rather hard to get adjusted to the new work. Bartholin realises the composer's intention more closely than Tudor. The music is a gay burlesque of eighteenth-century composers and this ballet suite is in the same style with a witty mock-baroque *pas de deux* for Kirsten Ralov and Poul Gnatt.

If I have talked at length about the ballet in Denmark it is because I feel that the country has been rather neglected. Anybody who is really interested in ballet should make an effort to see this company and particularly the Bournonville works. They will find a stronger collection of male dancers than we have seen in the past twenty-one years. If the company is weaker on the distaff side it is because a ballerina has not yet been developed to fill the gap left by Margot Lander who retired early this year. The modern side of the repertoire lacks any ballet that reflects the life of Denmark; the stories of Hans Anderson, upon which many ballets are based, do not really make up this omission. There does not also appear to be any young choreographer-in-the-making; this is a vital consideration for it is all very well to have a collection of excellent dancers if they have nothing new and vital to dance. This leads to a lack of interest which is the reason for ballet sinking into the slough of despond every decade.

THE DANCERS

Principal Dancer—Borge Ralov.

Soloists (the equivalent to principal dancers in England)—Gerda Karstens, Mona Vangsaa, Kirsten Ralov, Margrethe Schanne.

Male soloists—Svend Erik Jensen, Niels Bjorn Larsen, Hans Brenaa, Frank Schaufuss, Stanley Williams, Poul Gnatt, Fredbjorn Bjornsson, Erik Bruhn.

(*Above*) *As the sun starts to rise in Harald Lander's Greenlandic ballet*, Qarrtsiluni. *The dancers, reading from left to right, are—Svend Erik Jensen, Hans Brenaa, Niels Bjorn Larsen, Poul Wessel, and Ole Palle Hansen. The music is by Riisager and the dècor and costumes by Svend Johansen* (*Photo: Mydskov*)

(*Below*) *Fredbjorn Bjornsson and Margrethe Schanne in the second scene, Noon, from Harald Lander's* Morning, Noon and Night. *In this scene, the young senorita, who has been guarded by her vulture-like chaperons, dreams of love. The music is Torina's* Danzas Fantasticas *and the dècor and costumes are by Erik Nordgreen* (*Photo: Morgens Amsnaes*)

Curtain Up!

Gene Kelly taken in one of his dances for If You Feel Like Singing. *This M.G.M. musical was first known as* Summer Stock, *but the title has recently been changed. Apart from Fred Astaire (to be featured in our next number), Kelly is the foremost male dancer in musicals; he combines ballet technique with tap*

ALICIA MARKOVA'S niece Susie, who made the famous remark some time ago about the performing elephants at a circus dancing like her aunt, has now again spoken. Not long ago she was very curious to know the story of the dying swan and when she was told that it was about a swan who had been shot by a huntsman, she pondered on it for some time but did not say much. When the great ballerina recently went to have an operation for appendicitis, Susie, on being told, promptly remarked "I suppose Aunt Alicia is going to have the shot removed".

Readers will be glad to know that Madame Markova is making a great recovery from her operation. She is looking better than she has done for years and hopes to be dancing again in about six weeks time when she will join the Gala Performances of Ballet with Anton Dolin.

★

ANTON DOLIN is almost as famous as Sam Goldwyn for his quick retorts. The other day during a rehearsal of *Petrouchka* for the Gala Performances of Ballet, Alfred Katz (Markova and Dolin's American manager) who was watching, said, "I should very much like to play the role of the Bear". "Good," replied Dolin "now we need not bother to order a costume" (note—Katz is a man who is very ample in every direction).

★

DANCE and DANCERS has been responsible for inspiring people in many different ways, but we never thought we should inspire a cake. However 21-year-old John Walter Berry of Kettering, Northants, won the contest for the honour of making a cake for the Festival of Britain. It was the photographs in these pages that gave him the idea for his iced panels.

★

It has come to our notice that there is a petition going around the theatres where musicals are playing. The idea of such a petition is to stop American dancers dancing in musicals in England. Such childishness is unworthy of British artists; we thought this kind of thing was forgotten when we left school. The reason that London is now the Dancing capital of the world is because the English are interested and admire all great artists wherever they may hail from. It is on account of this that our companies have so rapidly reached the high position they hold today. Every ballet company has realised the value of using a few foreign artists. Exactly the same thing applies to musicals. When we have the dancers in this country who are in any way equal to the American dancers who dance in the shows that their country created, then will be the moment for somebody to speak. That moment has not, unfortunately, arrived.

★

Overheard in the stalls at Covent Garden during the curtain-calls on the first night of *Les Illuminations:*

First lady: Now, dear, you know everybody—tell me who these people are.

Second lady: (*as Benjamin Britten joins the dancers to take a call*) Well, dear, that's Frederick Ashton—he did the dances, you know.

First lady: (*entrance of Peter Pears*) And who's that?

Second lady: That's Cecil Beaton—and this (*as Cecil Beaton enters*) is Peter Pears, the one who does the singing.

First lady: How wonderful to know everybody by sight! And who's this? (*as Frederick Ashton comes on stage*).

Second lady: Oh, that's Benjamin Britten, of course—he had something to do with it—I forget what—wait till the lights come on and we'll see in the programme.

★

On Friday July 28th a tea-lecture was given by the Royal Academy of Dancing at Claridges Hotel at which Madame Tamara Karsavina celebrated Russian ballerina of the Imperial School and Diaghilev days, was guest lecturer.

After delivering a brief but delightful résumé on the cloistered lives of the young dancers in the Russian Imperial School of Ballet she was prevailed upon to answer audience questions. A reply to one question revealed that she was once severely reprimanded by a director of the school for too strenuously indulging in ballroom dancing which she admitted was then one of her favourite pastimes.

★

MOIRA SHEARER who once regretted the making of *The Red Shoes*, recently received a surprize gift from Japanese *première ballerina* Tani Momoko in admiration for her performance in that film. Especially flown from Japan was a lovely gold brocade scarlet-lined traditional Japanese wedding gown, and an autographed photograph of the sender.

Miss Shearer is now filming the *Tales of Hoffman.*

★

For the majority of the dancers in the New York City Ballet the flight to England was a maiden air voyage.

Shortly after the plane left La Guardia Airfield in New York one of the young ladies of the corps de ballet was distressed by the mounting pressure on her ear drums. A kindly stewardess proffered her chewing gum which she confided would soon bring relief.

About ten hours later when most of the passengers were peacefully asleep they were startled into wakefulness by worried cries of "Stewardess! Stewardess!" It was the young lady of the chewing gum. When the administering angel arrived she was asked in a perturbed voice: "How much longer do I have to go on chewing this gum?"

★

Said Maria Tallchief
"What a relief
To live in a chalet
and forget the ballet."

"How ungrateful you are
when I've made you a star.
Enough of the spleen,"
Said George Balanchine.

★

COMPETITION

Trudy Goth, Director of Choreographers Workshop, 471 Park Avenue, New York 22, is very anxious to have English entries for the Ballet Scenario Contest.

The rules of the contest specify that manuscripts should be written in narrative prose. A suggested form is Jerome Robbins' synopsis for *Fancy Free* published in George Amberg's American Ballet. The scenario should not be longer than three type-written, double-spaced pages. Characterisations of the protoganist and the antagonist not longer than 250 words each must accompany the scenario. There should not be less than three or more than ten characters.

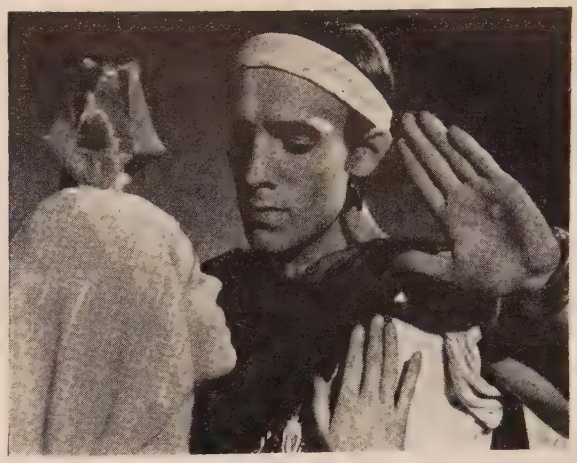
The winning script will be awarded a prize of 100 dollars. The winner will be announced on November 1, 1950. The decision of the judges, Trudy Goth, John Latouche, Louis Horst, George Amberg and Winifred Kahn, will be final.

All manuscripts should be submitted before September 20 to Trudy Goth at the above address.

THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL

by
Jay Price

One often wonders what has become of the dancers whose names were synonymous with Jooss Ballet. Scattered to the far corners of the earth one occasionally hears news of Hans Zullig in Switzerland; Hans Schwartz dancing in New York musicals; or Lucas Hovinga dancing in works presented by the Choreographers' Workshop in New York. Here in London I found, quite accidentally, Rolf Alexander taking a ballet class at Vera Volkova's studio—this is his story.

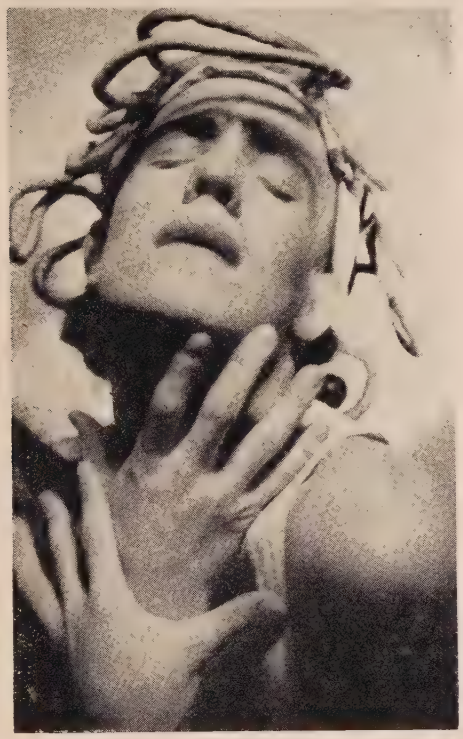


(*Left*) *Rolf Alexander in the first part of* The Prodigal Son *by Kurt Jooss*

(*Below*) *In the final scene from the same ballet, when he returns to his forgiving parents*

WHEN Rolf Alexander told me the story of Jooss dancer Otto Struller,* executed as a German spy in the last war, it was less of a lament for the passing of a talented fellow artist than a protest against a period symbolic of waste, destruction and indirectly the dissolution of his art medium—the Jooss Ballet. For in 1947, after thirteen years of life, the Jooss Ballet ceased functioning; lack of money, loss of its original members scattered by the war, were contributing factors.

* Struller, in an attempt to desert from the German forces in an American uniform was captured by the Allies and executed.



While several of his fellow artists found it their duty to return to their families in Germany, at the outbreak of the war, Rolf, who comes from Hattingen in the Ruhr, remained with the Jooss company for the duration. His hatred of the Nazi regime overrode a normal desire to be with his family for whom his concern was naturally great.

His career with the Jooss Ballet began in 1937 when he was seventeen. In the course of an uninterrupted ten-year tour of both continents his status as an artist grew and he was invested with important roles in the company's repertoire. Most notable were his interpretations of The Son in *The Prodigal Son*, Andrea in *Chronica* and Death in *The Green Table*. In 1941, when the company was in New York, he was cited in dance critic John Martin's annual role of honour for his performance as Death in *The Green Table*.

It is no easy task for a dancer schooled in the Jooss technique, roughly a system that combines both ballet and modern dance idioms, to feel at home in other dance forms. It requires an adjustment both physical and mental. With Jooss the emphasis was not on the perfect *entrechat*, the multiple *pirouette* or the brilliant double air turns; it was rather the projection of a ballet's dramatic content through movement and mime involving complicated *tempi* of music to heighten or strengthen ideas. In addition Jooss' ballets frequently had social consciousness, elevating his dancers from mere puppets to moralists in a constant aura of intellectualism.

Joining the St. James' Ballet in 1947 was for Rolf a transition; but with a dancer's adaptability he applied himself to the more rigid vocabulary of straight ballet. In the three months with the St. James' Ballet in the company of choreographers Pauline Grant, Alan Carter and Angelo Andes, he learned invaluable lessons in partnering.

A first step into musical comedy dancing occurred soon after, with an offer to dance the exciting Wild Horse dance in *Annie Get Your Gun*. Eight times weekly for two and a half years he donned the accoutrement and war paint of a savage American Indian. It is estimated that he used two hundred and fifty bars of soap yearly to remove the body make-up. However, no amount of soap could efface the monotony festering under the surface of this good paying job in a long run show. Rolf was plainly bored with being an Indian forty eight weeks in the year and longed for more fertile pastures. But where was a Jooss dancer to go?

He and his wife, Noelle de Mosa (former Jooss dancer now dancing in *Brigadoon*,) found diversion in their newly acquired home life. They had discovered a charming little studio house in St. John's Wood which they converted into a combined dance studio and living quarters. Here they practise their Jooss technique, occasionally inviting friends to participate. Rolf, who has become expert at playing the recorder, (a flute-like instrument,) frequently holds Sunday afternoon chamber music recitals in the studio for his friends. His mornings are usually devoted to ballet classes at the studios of Anna Serveskaya or Vera Volkova, and the modern dance classes of Sigurd Leeder who he regards highly as a teacher.

Currently working with Vera-Ellen on a new film whose tentative title is *Happy Go Lovely*, Rolf is undergoing yet another experience. Except for the erratic hours connected with the production of a film he finds the work stimulating enough. Dances for the film are under the direction of choreographer Pauline Grant with whom he was previously associated in the St. James' Ballet.

He has considerable admiration for the works of Antony Tudor which he believes are a reflection of our time,* therefore contributing to the growth of ballet today. He considers Kurt Jooss to be remarkable for his ideas, incomparable musicality, and choreographic genius.

Early next January Rolf Alexander and Noelle de Mosa will rejoin Jooss' newly formed company in Essen.

* In so far as he has adjusted the idiom of ballet to a question of our time, namely the psychological insight into man.

Speak Up!

Save the Marquis from the U.S.A.

SIR.—The information, presented in your June issue, that the Marquis de Cuevas' Grand Ballet has terminated its contract with the municipality of Monte Carlo and may henceforth be based in America must surely be regarded with dismay by the discerning ballet-goer.

In her recent article on her "discontent"—a discontent shared by many—Caryl Brahms stated that the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo possessed " a collection of the shoddiest works ever trundled around the world". Agreed. But as Miss Brahms also points out, the Marquis possesses some fine dancers: I would say that from the point of view of sheer dancing ability this Company possesses what is perhaps the greatest potential of any group seen in England during the past decade. I can imagine no more valuable asset to a company than Skibine, Eglevsky, and Hightower. In addition they have young dancers of immense promise in Pagava, Marjorie Tallchief. Now, after a mere three or four years in Europe, you tell us with a fine unconcern that in future they may be centred in America: a statement that can have only one meaning—Europe will be lucky to see them perhaps once in three years, and the Company will spend its time trundling its already travel-stained repertoire round the United States and Latin America.

Now I would not for one moment deny that the purely American companies flourish, and to a certain extent prosper, in their native land, just as the Sadler's Wells Company flourishes and whole-heartedly prospers here. Ballet Theatre in 1946 proved itself a wholly delightful and typically American troupe. But the Marquis de Cuevas' group is a hybrid: it is composed of Europeans, Russians and—most important—of Americans who are gradually acquiring a much-needed Franco-Russian veneer.

That it is at present only a veneer is undeniable: but it is noticeable that among the American members of the Company the rather strident acrobaticism, which tends to be an unfortunate hall-mark of what is fast becoming recognised as the American School is gradually softening, and there is great hope that with careful schooling, and a permanently established European base, these dancers will eventually acquire that all-important style, and appreciation of the Romantic and Classical traditions, which they at present lack.

I am not for one moment grudging all our friends in America a visit from the De Cuevas Company: they are just as much entitled to visits from foreign-based companies as we are, and their ties with the Franco-American De Cuevas group are very strong. We all know of the wonderful welcome accorded to our own Sadler's Wells and to the Ballets de Paris on their recent visits, and I for one believe that their brief change of air in the States has served as a distinct tonic to the Wells.

It is a very sad fact, but it would appear to be incontrovertible, that European companies do not as a rule benefit from long periods in the Americas; everyone knows what happened to the De Basil Company after the war years spent on the other side of the Atlantic, and it would be a tragedy indeed if a like fate were to befall the Grand Ballet. Yours,—GRAND BALLETOMANE.

dancing in musicals

2. Golden City

The Zulu Fire ritual in the final scene with Ben Johnson in the centre (Photo: Angus McBean)

IT is quite evident to everybody that *Golden City* set out to be England's answer to *Oklahoma*, and it seems a pity that it ended up being a pale imitation of its American ancestor. It is surely high time to discard *Oklahoma* as a yardstick; all the British dance-arrangers from Pauline Grant to Hazel Gee must by now realise that this slavish impersonation of Agnes de Mille, can only be taken as an admission of defeat. It is more than distressing to level the same criticism at Robert Helpmann of whom we have come to expect better things. That he has nothing new to say, in the greater part of the dances he arranged for *Golden City*, apart from one or two momentary flashes of originality, is a sorry reflection on our times. It would seem that he has completely failed to grasp the significant fact that Musical Comedy, whatever its faults and limitations, must be treated as an art form, and advance with each step it takes.

The *braaivleis* or picnic scene in the second act has been lifted straight from the box-social in *Oklahoma!*, recognisable in every detail, right down to the string of lanterns and the barn-dancers.

When he has chosen to be inventive Helpmann has put in some delightful touches, especially the double act in the Tivoli scene, and the witty burlesque danced with a coy bravado by Moira Fraser as the *Girl in the Window*. Both these are nothing short of brilliant, as is the charming dance arrangement of a number called *If I were to marry you*, sung and danced by Judith Whitaker and Ray Buckingham.

For the most part the dancing has a quality totally unexpected in a British musical show, and the principal dancers Barry Ashton and Marion Crawford dance with verve and poise. Through the whole show, Anita Philips a dancer with a genuine gift for comedy, darts like a fugitive zany.

The best chorus work comes in the lavish Coon's Carnival scene, in which Helpmann has conjured up all the excitement and glamour of a *Mardi Gras*, although the highlight of the dancing is the fabulous fire ritual, which gives Ben Johnson a heaven-sent opportunity to show, what an amazing technician he is.

It is when the chorus turns itself into a clumsy block that one feels that Mr Helpmann might have done better. It seems hard to believe that the only possible way of putting over a strong number is to cram your entire cast as close to the footlights as possible, and have them yell the song to the audience, precariously balanced on one knee. One is never quite certain where the choreography stops and the direction takes over.

However the show has vigour and force, and is, at least, a welcome change from what we have become accustomed to seeing, for the past few years, at the Adelphi Theatre. For this alone, we are more than grateful.

Richard Kayne

Schools

Three Russian Teachers in Paris

IN the dance it is very often the stars of yesterday who formed the glories of today. There is hardly an etoile of the present generation—Danilova, Eglevsky, Lichine, Skibine, Toumanova, Tallchief, Baronova, Riabouchinska, Hightower, Fonteyn, Vyroubova, Pagava, Moulin, Vaussard—who was not trained, at least in part, in one of the studios of Paris, and by one of the great Russian ballerinas: Olga Preobajenska, Mathilde Kchessinska, Lubov Egorova.

Famous St. Petersburg ballerina, Mathilde Kchessinska, teaching a pupil at her Passy studio (Photo: Lipnitzki)

These three *grandes dames de la danse* entered the St. Petersburg Imperial Academy toward the end of the last century, where they were subject to a very strict training and discipline—a salutary discipline, which Diaghilew passed on to Massine and to Karsavina, Danilova and many others, but which is practically lost today. This discipline, with its austere costumes, manners and systematic studies, stood them in good stead, and they rose to the top of the ladder, following the legendary Legnani. Marius Petipa, Lev Ivanov gave them leading roles in *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Nutcracker*, *Coppelia*, *Don Quichotte*, *Fille Du Pharaon*, etc. All three ballerinas went from one success to another, and Kchessinska married Grand Duke André while Egorova married Prince Troubetskoy. But after years of grandeur came the difficult period following 1914. However they had it in them to survive.

"Preo", as she is affectionately called, is now teaching at the Studio Wacker on Paris' picturesque and busy Place Clichy. Her verve is irresistible, her temper is short, but her patience is inexhaustible. Jumping from a chair on which she has perched the better to observe her charges, she will sprinkle the floor with her toy watering can, and call for renewed effort.

Mathilde Kchessinska—now 78—teaches in Passy, and she is still as coquettish as ever. At 8 p.m., after finishing her last course, she hurries home—for often as not 15-30 guests are awaiting her.

Lubov Egorova is a bit younger than the others. She had her own company in 1937: *Les Ballets De La Jeunesse*, and frequently she is called to London, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Geneva to remount the classics, such as *Sleeping Beauty*.

The influence of these three—and others: the late Vera Trefilowa, Alexandre Volonine, A. Vaganova (still in Russia) and those slightly younger (Nikitina, Kniassev, Nevelskaya)—have maintained the traditions of Russian teaching in Paris where such other great teachers as Madame Zambelli, Monsieur Ricaux, Madame Rozanne, Madame Nora, Leo Staats, Andre Guichot maintain the French method.

Francoise Reiss and Baird Hastings

Dancers you should know . . .

PEARL LANG

AT 27, Pearl Lang is emancipated. She is an important member of the Martha Graham Company, the fulfillment of a long time ambition; is married to an ideal husband Maurice J. Mitchell, a writer on economics and (she claims) good poetry; is also recognised as a choreographer of merit.

Miss Lang, who is from Chicago, does not walk—she floats. Her posture, whether sitting or standing, is always erect and there is much grace in her arm and hand movements when she talks. No—she does not use sign language—far from it! She has acquired, no doubt, from years of training in modern dance technique, the ability to speak expressively. Her voice is conspicuously well modulated and her eyes are deep pools of concentration.

Slightly built, her soft brown hair falls loosely to her shoulders; compassionate brown eyes and a tiny nose tilting slightly heavenward contrive to an expression of asceticism. In varying light she might easily be mistaken for a Titian madonna or the portrait of a young girl by Renoir. Yet strains of Russian, Polish and German ancestry blend into a paradox of the typical American girl..

Fatherless at an early age, she was raised by a mother who has a keen appreciation of the arts and who saturated her youth with trips to museums, theatres, the opera and ballet. It was upon one such occasion, when she was six, that her future vocation was determined. She recalls vividly a performance of the Isadora Duncan Dancers at which a Russian girl named Tamara electrified the audience by the simple expedient of crossing the stage, vertically, while gradually unfolding her arms until they were firmly outstretched in a kind of spiritual supplication.

The seriousness of this impression manifested itself within the four walls of Pearl's tiny bedroom. Here she spent much of her time imitating the movements of the dancers she'd seen and devising little ballets for herself and her companions.

It all indicated dancing lessons for Pearl, but as the family resources were in a state of depletion at the time it wasn't until she was eleven that formal training began in the form of a scholarship from the Nicholas Tsoukalos School of Greek Dancing. Greek dancing was very much in vogue. At twelve it was augmented by another scholarship to the school of Francis Allis who taught ballet and a kind of German dance that can only be described as "after Kreutzberg".

Serious training began at eighteen when she had completed two years of a liberal arts course at the University of Chicago. That year she went to New York to take Martha Graham's June course in modern dance. The return to Chicago University to resume academic studies was curtailed by an invitation to join Graham's company. Overcome by this unexpected honour she hurriedly left school her family, and a slightly incredulous swain, gasping for an explanation.

The Utopian bubble soon burst with the realization that she had descended upon a city with little funds and no immediate means of support. In her eagerness to reach Graham the necessity of money was dismissed as a boring obstacle. Proceeds from Graham concerts were meagre, as the few concerts given annually were less intended as money making ventures than safety valves against artistic putrefaction.

However, the gravity of Pearl's dilemma was soon eased. Moses Soyer, celebrated American painter, employed her as a model for a series of paintings he was doing of Martha Graham's latest work *American Document*. Along with bits of secretarial work at Graham's studio she managed to survive.

The year 1943 marked the beginning of a long association with Graham. It was also the year that she made her professional début with the Graham Company at Bennington College in Vermont. A tour with Erick Hawkins, Graham's leading male dancer, of New England and the middle western states, followed. For this she created two solo works, her first expositions in choreography; *The Hills Are Ready For Climbing* to a score by Louis Horst, an essay on youth going forth to meet the challenge of life; and *Dark Lady* of the sonnets by Shakespeare to a score by Catherine Lee.

Artistically the tour was gratifying. She returned to New York broke. As if by instinct she sought the protective arms of Broadway. Graham, herself, was a soloist in the Greenwich Village Follies in 1923, which was a consoling thought for Pearl where loss of prestige was concerned.

She accepted a job in the musical *One Touch of Venus* in which she understudied Sono Osato. A year later she left *One Touch of Venus* to do an important concert with Graham at the National Theatre in New York. The fact that the concert concurred with an offer to dance the *June Dance* and *Vulgar Carnival Woman* in *Carousel* did not deter her from doing both. By careful manipulation she managed to rehearse for both productions, appearing in the Graham concert by the gracious consent of Agnes de Mille who directed the dances for *Carousel*.

Encouraged by the unprecedented success of her company at the National Theatre, Graham presented another concert the following year, February 1946, at the more spacious Ziegfield Theatre. It was a momentous occasion for Pearl, for Graham relinquished to her the role of Mary in *El Penitente*, a biblical work done in the New Mexican mystery play form. It was a distinction for Pearl, she was the first Graham satellite to sustain a leading role in the company's repertoire. The critics were impressed and on the strength of her performance, dance critic John Martin recommended that Graham create a work especially for her.

The following year she assisted Agnes de Mille in devising the dances for *Allegro*, a short lived musical of an experimental nature. She briefly replaced Anita Alvarez in *Finian's Rainbow* and in the summer of 1948 performed with Graham's company at the New London Dance Festival. The second of the new series of modern dance festivals held annually in New London, Connecticut. She was invited to dance in *Touch and Go* by choreographer Helen Tamiris (*Annie Get Your Gun*) and was commissioned by the Julliard School of Music in New York to create a ballet to an original score by Richard Winslow. The work, for two dancers, was called *Song of Deborah* and was based on a story from the old testament.

Here with the Graham Company on July 13th to fulfill an engagement at the Piccadilly Theatre, Miss Lang returned to America on August 1st. Disappointed when the season was cancelled by Martha Graham's knee injury, she is looking forward to her return visit to England where she would one day like to teach.

Left. Pearl Lang with Robert Cohan in Martha Graham's Eye of Anguish
Photos: Chris Alexander

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PROSPECTUS ON REQUEST

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

NEW YORK CITY BALLET finished their season at Covent Garden on August 19. During the last week a new work by the English choreographer John Cranko was added to the repertoire. This was called *The Witch*, danced to Ravel music with setting and costumes by Dorothea Tanning (wife of the famous artist Max Ernst). Moncion and Melissa Hayden took the principal roles.

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET returned for one week from August 21 when they gave a number of works that are not in the repertoire for the American tour. These included the full-length *Coppelia*, *Ballet Imperial*, and *Ballabile*.

★

We are all glad that after many vicissitudes, BALLET THEATRE (now called AMERICAN NATIONAL BALLET THEATRE) are to open at The Royal Opera House on August 28, where they will remain until September 9. The principal dancers are Nora Kaye, Alicia Alonso, and Igor Youskevitch. The ballets include Balanchine's *Theme and Variations*, Robbins' *Fancy Free* and *Fascimile*, Tudor's *Romeo and Juliet* and *Pillar of Fire*, De Mille's *Fall River Legend* and *Rodeo*, Loring's *Billy the Kid*, Taras' *Designs with Strings*, and the new Ballet by Herbert Ross, *Caprichos*, which was featured in our August issue.

★

After several weeks rehearsal, the SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET will open at The Opera House, Manchester, in the beginning of September when they give performances with the Sadlers Wells Opera. At the end of the month they will be back at their own theatre. On the first night of the season a new work by Balanchine is to be given. This is called *Trumpet Concerto* to Haydn's music of the same name, with a setting and costumes by Vivienne Kurnot. Later in the season John Cranko's *Pineapple Poll* will have its *première*. Set to Sullivan music (arranged by Mackerris), it will have décor by Osbert Lancaster, whose first work for the theatre this is.

★

In the near future we can expect a number of British films in which Ballet plays a large part. The Powell-Pressburger *Tales of Hoffman* is now in production. All the dance sequences were shot before the Sadler's Wells Ballet left for America. Frederick Ashton is responsible for the choreography as well as appearing in the role of Klienzack. Leonide Massine doubles the roles of Spalanzani, Franz and Schlemil; Robert Helpmann those of Miracle, Dapertutto, Coppelius and Lindorf. Moira Shearer (star of *Red Shoes*) heads the cast as the doll, Olympia. The French ballerina Ludmilla Tcherina, who also had a small role in *Red Shoes* will play the role of Giulietta the Venetian courtesan. Sir Thomas Beecham has arranged the score and will conduct the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Early next year, after the Sadler's Wells Ballet have returned from America, London Film Productions will start on a production of the full-length *Sleeping Beauty*. Margot Fonteyn has already been signed up by Alexander Korda. We understand that the ballet will remain intact without any other nonsense woven into it. It seems one of the most sensible ideas that anybody has thought up for some time. It will help to further the prestige of British films and ballet as well as being a wonderful chance for all those people in towns and countries where the Wells could never possibly go with such a big production.

Natalie Krassovska in Les Sylphides. *She is prima ballerina of the Gala Performances of Ballet with Anton Dolin, which are now touring the provinces before they open at the Stoll Theatre, London, on October* 24

(*Photo: Walter Owen*)

★

GALA PERFORMANCES of BALLET with Anton Dolin (wrongly announced as Ballet Royale in our last issue) opened in Southsea on August 14. After an eight weeks tour of the major provincial cities, the company will come to London where they are to give a two months season at the Stoll Theatre. By this time Alicia Markova, who has been recovering from an operation, will be dancing with the company. The full length *Giselle* is being added to the repertoire, and London will again have the chance of seeing Markova and Dolin in the roles of which they are the greatest living exponents. There is every possibility that Tamara Toumanova will give a number of guest performances and Leonide Massine may appear as The Hussar in *Le Beau Danube* as well as in the title role in *Petrouchka*. During the two months a number of new works will be added to the repertoire.

★

BALLET RAMBERT, who are now on an extensive tour of England lasting until Christmas, will give the world *première* of David Paltenghi's *St. Agnes Eve* at Bristol on August 30. This work was originally to have been danced to the music of Delius but owing to the difficulties of scoring this composer for a small orchestra, it has now been altered to that of César Franck. Roger Furse, whose other work for the ballet has included designs for *Adam Zero* and *The Prospect Before Us* is designing the costumes and scenery for this new ballet, in which Margaret Hill and David Paltenghi have principal dancing roles.

★

THE NY NORSKE BALLETT from Norway which was founded by ex-musical comedy dancer Louise Brown (who is also the wife of a British Diplomat until recently at the British Embassy in Oslo) is making a tour of Britain. The company opens in Glasgow on August 28. This will be followed by visits to Harrogate, Doncaster, Middlesbrough and other English towns. They are giving the same repertoire as they gave when they visited Doncaster last year. To this repertoire two new ballets have been added, especially for the visit to Britain—*Fanitullen* (based on an old Norwegian folk tale by Joergen Moe, music by Klaus Egge) and *La Marquise* (music by Pauline Hall). This company is the only ballet company in Norway and has done much pioneer work in bringing ballet to that country.

★

BRITISH DANCE THEATRE

British Dance Theatre is a group that was started by ex-Jooss dancer Liza Ullman early this year in Manchester. The group emerged from the Art of Movement studio which Ullmann started to perpetuate the technique founded on the research of Rudolph Von Laban.

Laban now lives in Manchester, it was he who devised a system of dance that has been of the greatest importance in forming the modern European School. His most famous pupils were Mary Wigman and Kurt Jooss. Laban's ideas were reflected in the work of the Jooss company. During the last war he organised a system for teaching corrective exercises to factory workers in England. Although he is virtually the godfather of the company he is not directly connected with it except in an advisory capacity.

The company is now independent of the school and is now under the artistic direction of Hettie Loman who is also the principal choreographer. But although it is independent, the company is fed from the school and nobody is admitted to the company unless they have had their basic training in the school.

Having given a number of successful performances in the North, British Dance Theatre intends to come to London when as well as giving a short season in a theatre they will appear on television.

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Dance and Dancers . . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

The revived BALLET DES CHAMPS-ELYSÉES have had an enormous success during their tour of Israel. They appeared in Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa, giving thirty-two performances in one month. The Company is in excellent shape. The main pillars being Skorik, Darmance, and Héléne Traline, with Guélis as the principal male dancer. Igor Fosca rejoins the company for the Scandinavian tour and Youli Algaroff will rejoin the company when he has recovered from his illness, which should be in two months time. From the end of August to the end of October the company are touring Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, and Belgium.

★

DAVID LICHINE is forming a company which is rehearsing in Paris. This will consist of himself, his wife Riabouchinska, Victor Gzovsky and about thirty dancers, many of whom were with the Champs-Elysées Ballet. We hope to publish more news about this company in our next issue.

HOLLAND

We have had little news from Holland since *Dance and Dancers* started but now Mr. Hornstra, Editor of the Dutch Ballet paper *Danskroniek*, makes up for lost time:—

There were few good ballet performances in Holland last winter. The only touring group being José Greco's ensemble which was a great success everywhere. The success was mainly due to the Spanish dancers Nila Amparo and Luis Olivares and the two gipsy dancers Tere and Juan Maya.

But Holland makes up for what it lacks in the winter by having every year an interesting summer season, the centre of which is Scheveningen (famous bathing resort), and part of the Governmental Residence at The Hague. Holland, like almost every other country, has its festival, which this year lasted from June 15 to July 15. In two arts, Holland has always excelled—music and painting. This year both were well represented, but ballet and theatre occupied an important place in the programme. Enormous enthusiasm was shown for the performances of both the Old Vic and the Young Vic companies. These were followed by a series of recitals by ROSARIO and ANTONIO. Holland's opinion about these two dancers is that Antonio is a greater artist than his partner and, as far as technique is concerned, is one of the greatest dancers of today. Rosario surprised everyone by giving a very interesting and moving interpretation of *El Amor Brujo*.

The repertoire of the GRAND BALLET de MARQUIS de CUEVAS which followed, consisted mainly of ballets well known in this country but included a revival of *Petrouchka*. The latter was conducted by Pierre Monteux, who conducted the first performance in Paris in 1911. This revival was of great historic importance as the ballet had never been performed in Holland before, but it appeared that the ballet as a whole is not acceptable today. Nicholas Orloff's Petrouchka was a performance of a good student, but completely lacked the dramatic intensity which the role requires. Rosella Hightower gave the best performance in the whole ballet as the Ballerina. The settings by Benois were faded and unconvincing. Stravinsky's score was, as always, fresh and vital. Queen Juliana, who was present at The Hague Gala Performance, gave the signal for a great ovation in honour of the conductor Pierre Monteux.

In the near future the country will be visited by TERESA and LUISILLO and their group, JOSÉ GRECO'S company, SOLANGE SCHWARZ and her group, MARIEMMA, JOSÉ TORRES, and possibly PASUKA and his *BALLET NEGRE*.

Due to the lack of good ballet training in Holland the art of dancing has never passed the Dilletantish level. When Janine Charrat recently visited this country to arrange the choreography for Weber's *Oberon*, the Dutch critics remarked that it was rather expensive to have this famous French choreographer engaged for the small Opera ballet which possesses only one good dancer.

Now it seems possible that there may be a change in the ballet life of Holland on account of the excellently trained new ballet group called BALLET RECITAL, under the leadership of Franco-Russian Sonia Gaskell. Due to her rigorous discipline and the fact that she does not make any concessions, Sonia Gaskell has been able to group young talented dancers, with whom she gave performances in Arnhem (during the music festival) and in The Hague, (at the Royal Theatre), with ballets of Dutch choreographers, composers, and designers. The programme included *Odysseus and Kalypso* (choreography by Sonia Gaskell, music by Arnold Juda) with Louki van Oven as Aphrodite, Marie-Jeanne van der Veen as Kalypso, Pieter van der Sloot as Odysseus, and Maria Huisman as Pallas Athene. *Alles om eem mantel—The Traveller's Cape* (choreography by Sonia Gaskell, music by K. Stokvis, designer F. Carasso) in which ballet 16-years old Marianne Boudijn appeared as the coming Dutch ballerina. *Pictures from Old Amsterdam* (choreographer Pieter van der Sloot, music Julius Rontgen, designer K. Bruckman). So far *Odysseus and Kalypso* is by far the best ballet and has a great artistic importance. *Pictures from Old Amsterdam* could be shortened but the second act, The two Frostitutes and the Spanish Brabander, showed Ballerina Louki van Oven in a very expressive dance of international standard. All Holland's hopes are now concentrated on this group which could be the beginning of an authentic Dutch ballet.

U. S. S. R.

Our Moscow correspondent writes:—

Coppelia was given at the Affiliated Bolshoi Theatre on June 19. It was very interesting to see this ballet, so far away from the theatres I know and it started to dawn on me how very international a thing is ballet.

The production is far in advance of Sadler's Wells, here there is no anæmic toy-like village square but a very real town with a most realistic doll perched up in a balcony window. It was a great relief to see a Doctor Coppelius completely in character, a simply enormous man, the type of doll maker who is loved by the children and actually liking and confiding in Swanhilda. In the second act, instead of Swanhilda diving behind the curtain when Coppelius appears she joins him in a conspiracy to deceive Franz in retaliation for his unfaithfullness in making loving gestures to the doll. Although this bears little relation to Hoffmann, I think this is a better version of the story as it is more exciting for the audience and gives Swanhilda more scope in her teasing of Franz. Incidentally Franz does not sleep through the doll scene but is only slightly doped, when he recovers Coppelius pretends to bring his doll to life.

The décor of this act was extraordinary, rather too like the Wells production, and gave the appearance of an enormous museum rather than a toyshop. The dolls were very realistic and it was hard to think of them as human beings.

It was the final act that specially impressed me. The scene opened with the usual village gathering on a feast day, with all the peasants dressed in picturesque Mazurka and Czardas costumes. There are a large number of children and it is extraordinary the way they dance with such poise and confidence. There were a number of alterations in the music as they danced a Czardas to the music which the Wells use for the Betrothal dance, while the music of Prayer was used for a dance called Morning. The choreography for the latter was much the same as we know but with less balancing and difficult arabesques. Dawn was the same, but the music we used for the male variation was danced by another soloist with brilliant elevation. Franz (Messerer, had two variations

Galina Ulanova, the greatest of all the Soviet ballerinas, in Swan Lake *Act* II. *Her best roles are* Swan Lake, Giselle, Raymonda, Cinderella, Romeo and Juliet, Lost Illusions, *and the* Fountains of Bakhchisarai

U. S. S. R.—*continued*

which he danced with the style and technique which I now know only Russian-trained male dancers possess; his speed, lightness, and elegance were remarkable though not, apparently, outstanding compared with any of the other principal male dancers in Russia.

Once again I was terribly disappointed with the ballerina (Temomernova). She was such a muscular creature, over-enlarged calf muscles, an enormous broad back, and worst of all a poking chin. She always appeared to be fishing for applause, which though it inevitably came, was not really justified. Her technique was undoubtedly extraordinary, her elevation good, and her hand movements very controlled, but it all amounted to little.

In all these productions no effort is spared in making the décor as realistic as possible. Every small detail is correct even to the street lighting in village squares. In the first act of *Coppelia* as evening drew on, it was amazing to watch the backcloth (which was a small river with a town on the far bank) recede into very realistic dusk; the sky turned a pale grey blue and the moon rose slowly. In another ballet, there was an extraordinary storm effect with the rain racing across the sky, the wind whistling in the trees which really have leaves on them and also real trunks; none of the cardboard efforts of our own productions. Perhaps this is really too much for ballet which should be able to convey its meaning by sheer dancing but it would be a good idea for some of our English producers to come to Moscow as it might make for better productions especially of our classical ballets.

AUSTRALIA

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL THEATRE BALLET of Melbourne gave the world *première* of *Corroboree* in Sydney on July 3. This ballet had choreography by Rex Reid to an aboriginal dance suite by John Anthill, and costumes and masks by Robin Lovejoy.

This one year old company, consisting of some thirty Australian dancers, is headed by former Ballet Rambert dancers Joyce Græme, Margaret Scott and Rex Reid. In the short time at their disposal the directors have worked wonders of cohesion and discipline in achieving this new and important work. *Corroboree* is a series of group dances round a central figure of the Medicine Man, who remains, throughout the intense action, the pivot round which the masked dancers revolve. Intelligent lighting and padded tights help to maintain the illusion of an all male cast. The very difficult music, beautifully played by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and conducted by the composer himself, makes it imperative for the dancers to count under their breath.

The ballet is divided into seven sections or ceremonies in which the various totemic dances of the Frog-men, the Kangaroo, the Emu, and the Snakeman are shown. Rex Reid's undoubted sense of the theatre has saved him from the obvious pitfalls of monotony and repetition in adapting primitive dances. He uses his groups in a masterly fashion, weaving intricate patterns and controlling the recurring outbursts of savage rhythm, which makes this adaptation of an entirely alien dance art more convincing and exciting than an authentic corroboree would appear to a modern audience.

John Manuel, as the Medicine Man, is the only outstanding soloist, dancing without interruption for three quarters of an hour, which makes the Dance of the Chosen Virgin in Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* a kindergarten romp in comparison. The names of these two ballets, closely linked in spirit and sometimes in execution, could be linked together—which the choreographer and composer of *Corroboree* should take as a high tribute to their talents.

Cornelius Conyn

Ballet Dates

AMERICAN NATIONAL BALLET THEATRE at COVENT GARDEN

Aug.	28	*Theme and Variations, Pillar of Fire, Bluebird, Rodeo.*
	29	*Billy the Kid, Fall River Legend, Don Quixote, Helen of Troy.*
	30 (M)	*Billy the Kid, Fall River Legend, Don Quixote, Helen of Troy.*
	30 (E)	*Theme and Variations, Pillar of Fire, Bluebird, Rodeo.*
	31	*Billy the Kid, Fall River Legend, Don Quixote, Helen of Troy.*
Sept.	1	*Theme and Variations, Pillar of Fire, Bluebird, Rodeo.*
	2 (M)	*Theme and Variations, Pillar of Fire, Bluebird, Rodeo.*
	2 (E)	*Billy the Kid, Fall River Legend, Don Quixote, Helen of Troy.*
	4	*Interplay, Nutcracker Pas de Deux, Facsimile, Helen of Troy.*
	5	*Giselle, Caprichos, Interplay.*
	6 (M)	*Romeo and Juliet, Designs with Strings, Black Swan, Fancy Free.*
	6 (E)	*Giselle, Caprichos, Interplay.*
	7	*Romeo and Juliet, Designs with Strings, Black Swan, Fancy Free.*
	8	*Romeo and Juliet, Facsimile, Nutcracker Pas de deux, Fancy Free.*
	9 (M)	*Romeo and Juliet, Designs with Strings, Black Swan, Fancy Free.*
	9 (E)	*Caprichos, Black Swan, Rodeo, Theme and Variations.*

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Sept.	4-16	Opera House, Manchester, with the Sadler's Wells Opera Company.
	18-	Opening of Winter Season at Sadler's Wells Theatre.

INTERNATIONAL BALLET

Aug. 21-Sept.	2	Opera House, Manchester.
Sept.	4-16	Theatre Royal, Birmingham.
	18-23	Globe Theatre, Stockton.
	25-30	Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield.
Oct.	2-14	Grand Theatre, Leeds.
	16-21	Theatre Royal, Nottingham.

BALLET RAMBERT ON TOUR

Sept.	4	Civic Theatre, Chesterfield.
	11	Opera House, Leicester.
	18	Butlin's Theatre, Skegness.
	25	People's Palace, London.
Oct.	2	Regent Theatre, Chelmsford.
	9	Possibly Ireland.
	16	
	23	
	30	Pavilion, Torquay.

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Aug.	28	Empire, Sheffield.
Sept.	4	Royal Theatre, Nottingham.
	11	The Theatre Royal, Newcastle.
	18	The Royal Theatre, Bolton.
Oct.	2	The Pavilion, Bournemouth.
	9	The Empire, Edinburgh.
	16	The Alhambra, Glasgow.
	24	The Stoll Theatre, London.

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Aug.	21-26	*Ballet Theatre at the Empire Theatre. Theme and Variations, Fall River Legend, Fancy Free.*
	28-30	*Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo at the Empire Theatre. Swan Lake (Act II), Beau Danube, New Ballet.*
Aug. 31-Sept.	2	*Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo. Giselle* (Two Acts), *Petrouchka.*
Sept.	4-9	*Rosario and Antonio at the Empire Theatre.*

(There will be no Sunday performance of ballet).

Clubs

For readers who want to participate in the autumn activities of ballet clubs here is a list of the clubs and the addresses of club secretaries.

BOURNEMOUTH

Bournemouth Ballet Club—Sec.: A. A. Oat, 29th Avenue, Branksome Park, Bournemouth.

BRISTOL

Bristol Ballet Club—Sec.: Mrs. S. Bain, 1 Greville Road, Bristol 3.

ISLE OF MAN

The Manx Ballet Club—Dir.: Monica Mudie, Wateredge, Beach Road, Port St. Mary, Isle of Man.

LIVERPOOL

Merseyside Ballet Circle—Sec.: Miss R. V. Mooney, West Vale, Neston, Liverpool.

LONDON

The London Ballet Circle—Sec.: Mr. S. W. Hawkins, 47 Ashchurch Grove, London, W. 12.

The Phœnix Ballet and Dramatic Club—Sec.: Mrs. M. Paine, 73 South Hill Park, N. W. 3.

The Hampstead Ballet Club—Dir.: Beryl Paul, 70 Heath Street, Hampstead, N. W. 3.

Lewisham Ballet Theatre Club—Sec.: Margaret S. Childs, 47 Allenswood Road, Eltham, S. E. 9.

Willesden Ballet Circle—Sec.: Christine Greenfield, 20 Dean Road, N. W. 2.

Wimbledon Ballet Club—Sec.: Geoffrey Lance, 61 Ridgeway Place, S. W. 19.

MANCHESTER

Ballet Guild—Sec.: Jeanette Whittaker, 122 Church Street, West Radcliffe, Manchester.

The Ballet Club—Sec.: Phyllis Howell, 14 Ellesmere Street, Northenden, Manchester.

NEWCASTLE

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Ballet Club—Sec.: Mrs. M. Bennitt, 1 Grosvenor Villas, Jesmond, Newcastle, 2.

OXFORD

Oxford University Ballet Club—Sec.: John Percival, St. Catherines, Oxford.

RICHMOND

Beverly Ballet Club—Sec.: Jeanne Gibson, 20 Orchard-rise, Richmond, Surrey.

YORK

York Settlement Ballet Group—Dir.: Jeanette Herman, The Settlement, Holgate Hill, York.

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January (Vol. 1, No. 1). Cover: Helpmann, Grant and Ashton in *Cinderella*. Contains illustrated features on Margot Fonteyn, Rosella Hightower, Jeanne Artois. Also large pictures of Jean Babilée, John Gilpin, Katherine Dunham, Paula Hinton and reviews of *Pleasuredrome* and *Antonia*, etc.

February (No. 2). Cover: Massine and Babilée in a dressing-room at Earls Court. Contains illustrated features on the Nijinsky Galas, International Ballet, Uday Shankar, Salomé on T.V., Tommy Linden. Also large pictures of Beryl Grey, Chauviré. Vera Ellen and Valerie Bettis and pictorial supplement of four new Champs Elysées ballets (including *Till Eulenspiegel*), etc.

March (No. 3). Cover: Toumanova and Skibine in *Don Quixote*. Contains illustrated features on John Cranko, Modern Dance in America, Ballet Rambert (part I), Ambassador Ballet, The Folk Dance Festival. Also large pictures of Helpmann and Fonteyn, Michael Somes, Sheilah O'Reilly, Pirmin Trecu, Teresa and Luisillo and Norah Kaye and pictorial supplement of *Beauty and the Beast* and the first two Empire Ballets, etc.

April (No. 4). Cover: Frank Sinatra, Betty Garrett, Gene Kelly, Vera Ellen and Ann Miller from *On the Town*. Contains illustrated features on Markova and Dolin, Escudero, *On the Town*, Ballet Rambert (part II), the R.A.D. Also pictures of Vyroubova, Antonio, Jacques Jodel, Mona Inglesby and Ernest Hewitt and Jane Shore and pictorial supplement of *El Destino* and *Don Quixote*.

May (No. 5). Cover: Rosario and Antonio at Alexandra Palace. Contains illustrated features on Nijinsky, Violetta Elvin, Robert Helpmann, How to look at Spanish dancing, Designing for ballet and the Katherine Dunham School in Paris. Also pictures of José Greco, Marie Rambert, Paula Hinton, Michele Fokine, etc., pictorial supplement of *Summer Interlude*, the New York City Ballet's *Prodigal Son* and *Jones Beach* and an article by Caryl Brahms.

June (No. 6). Cover: Markova and Dolin in *Italian Suite*. Contains illustrated features on Toumanova and Vyroubova (Two Giselles at the Paris Opera), Sally Gilmore, Bunty Kelly, the Dances of Spain by Elsa Brunelleschi, Les Ballets Americains at the Champs Elysées, Anton Dolin on "My First meeting with Nijinsky." Also photographs of Beryl Grey, Danilova and Franklin, Svetlana Beriosova and Pirmin Trecu, photographs of the Danish Ballet Company and pictorial supplement of *Ballet Imperial* and *Age of Anxiety*.

July (No. 7). Cover: Tallchief and Moncion in *Firebird*. Contains illustrated features on Roland Petit, the New York City Ballet, dancers Rosario and Antonio, Teresa and Luisillo, the Empire ballet, Anita Philips, etc. Also photographs of Youskevitch, Fonteyn and Ashton, Erik Hawkins, McMillan, Grey and Field and pictorial supplement of *Ballabile, Winter Night, Frankie and Johnnie*.

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